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SUBJECT: GEN AGWAI UPDATES ON UNAMID

11. (SBU) SUMMARY. In a December 5 meeting with PolOff and FieldOff, AMIS Force Commander GEN Agwai described himself as the target of Government of Sudan (GoS) displeasure for his current stance on the Ceasefire Commission and articulated his plans to seek a sit-down with the GoS in the near future to agree on a more systematic way forward. He was not optimistic about UNAMID deployment, stressing the need for the arrival of the ten battalions and for their proper equipping, particularly in terms of helicopter assets. GEN Agwai, while still not perhaps as forthright as necessary on the CFC issue, is making strides in attempting to redirect the CFC issue away from its focus on money and more toward a focus on implementation. END SUMMARY.

AGWAI FALLING OUT OF GOS FAVOR

12. (SBU) In a December 5 meeting with PolOff and FieldOff, African Union Mission in the Sudan (AMIS) Force Commander Martin Luther Agwai reported that he was not currently in the GoS' good graces on account of his efforts regarding the CFC (or, as the GoS allegedly accused, on account of his trying to annul the CFC). Agwai pointed out that the CFC had been effectively dormant since July, addressing only administrative issues when it actually did convene and diverting its focus from the actual issue of ceasefire to that of money. "It is clear beyond any reasonable doubt," Agwai declared, "that both chambers of the Commission just want to make money."

13. (SBU) When Agwai had raised these issues with the GoS in Khartoum (from which he had just returned earlier in the day), he had tried to explain that requesting UNAMID to provide guidelines on Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA) implementation did not equate to annulling the DPA. He corrected his earlier DPA interpretation and said that the CFC should in fact have two members per delegation: one at headquarter level and one at sector level. Agwai was firm that he would resist cohabitation with the GoS in AMIS camps and that it had been the GoS' own machinations which had prevented the CFC from properly functioning in the first place, citing as an example its obstruction of AMIS investigations into the Haskanita incident.

14. (SBU) GEN Agwai resolved to collaborate with Joint Special Representative Adada (currently in El Fasher) to schedule a meeting during the week of December 10 with the CFC representatives to try to bridge these differences. He also acknowledged the importance of presenting any changes in the structure of the CFC "politely" and in writing to the DPA signatories. The meeting would be an opportunity for a full discussion of the issues to clear the air and for Agwai to reiterate that UNAMID would not provide assistance to any of the CFC observers.

NOTHING TO SHOW BY JANUARY 1

15. (SBU) GEN Agwai was not optimistic when it came to UNAMID deployment, calling into question the security of the forces and the estimated time of arrival, which he did not foresee in earnest before December 2008. He noted that current troop rotations were

AMIS only and that only two of ten identified UNAMID battalions were outfitted with accommodations and other logistical support upon Darfur arrival. Agwai stated that UNAMID could be credible only when coming from a position of strength, but at the moment, he said, "we are at our weakest," due in large part to the timing of troop rotations.

¶6. (SBU) In the immediate term, GEN Agwai recommended getting all ten UNAMID battalions on the ground as quickly as possible and on providing them better equipment than that of AMIS forces, particularly in terms of helicopter assets. He said another six battalions outfitted with APCs would allow the peacekeeping force to take the necessary initiative and to dominate areas of control, but without this show of force, he predicted that "there will be nothing to show by January 1."

¶7. (SBU) COMMENT. As exemplified by his revised decision to allow a CFC observer at both the headquarters and sector level (as stipulated in the DPA), Agwai often does not consider the full implications of some of his proposals to restructure the CFC before announcing them. However, his recognition that approaching the CFC observers - particularly the signatory representatives - in a diplomatic manner is commendable, and is a tactic that we will continue to encourage. END COMMENT.

¶8. (U) Tripoli minimize considered.

FERNANDEZ